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Title: Need to take necessary steps for solid waste management in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala.

DR. SHASHI THAROOR (THIRUVANANTHAPURAM): Thiruvananthapuram has been facing a severe solid waste management crisis since December last year due to the non-functioning of Vilappilsala garbage treatment plant. Garbage trucks are unable to transport waste to the plant due to severe opposition from the locals. The High Court has ordered the reopening of the plant and even the Supreme Court has rejected the plea of the Vilappilsala Panchayat for a stay on the High Court's order. The residents of Vilappilsala are vehemently opposed to the reopening of the plant.

This has led to garbage accumulating in public places and also spilling on to the streets. Waste collection has come to a standstill as there is no space to landfill or even burn the garbage.

Thiruvananthapuram is facing an epidemic like situation and the health of the people of the city cannot be taken lightly any longer. The city receives a large number of international visitors who are also being exposed to the unhygienic conditions. The situation will only worsen once the monsoon sets in. Vilappilsala itself is at risk if the garbage already dumped in the plant is not treated.

It is also of critical importance that the equipment for construction of a leachate treatment unit and sanitary landfill be transported to the Vilappilsala plant. The functioning of the garbage treatment plant is imperative till the plans for decentralisation of waste management in the city take shape which will at the earliest take 3 to 4 months.

I urge the government to intervene in the matter for the sake of the health of the residents of the city.